

Testimony submitted in opposition to HR 11 & SR 12

Madam Chair and members of the Appropriations Committee for a well-run and informative meeting.

I have the honor, I guess, of being your last speaker. I am a private contract worker for a nonprofit. My pay has not changed in 18 months. The same 18 months state workers saw three successive pay increases. Please vote no on HR 11/ SR12

The provenance of this agreement undermines our elected representatives' professed commitment to transparency. It was negotiated in secret between a governor running for re-election and his most reliable constituency, Connecticut's public sector workers. A detailed cost analysis was made public two days before a holiday weekend. As with too much of the business conducted by this state, this is a deal made behind closed doors and drop it on the public as a *fait accompli*.

Second, the governor and you, our representatives, have known for three years this day was coming. A year ago, Boston Consulting Group offered recommendations to prepare for the retirements. Mr. Lamont did nothing; the legislature did nothing to force his hand. In the eleventh hour, we now have this agreement that carries an immediate cost of nearly \$2 billion. Future GENERATIONS will pay billions more since these hikes and bonuses will factor into the pension wage base. If reports are accurate, we will experience an even worse situation by 2024 when another 3,000 workers become retirement eligible. If these past years hadn't been one hapless fumble after another, I'd almost think we find ourselves in this current SNAFU by design.

(Based on testimony today, if I were a state worker, I'd be very afraid. With a pension obligation – a promise -- in the tens of billions of dollars, at some point the spigot will drain dry. To these workers I say, we, the private sector critics of this agreement, are not your enemy. Reform has begun in Tiers 3 & 4 pensions. It must not only accelerate but inform the entire state employee retirement system. An unfunded promise is nothing more than a lie.)

Negotiations should be adversarial, not a love fest. Unions' agents are paid to win the best package for their members. Yours, conversely, is to win the most advantageous agreement for ALL the citizens of this state, not a select minority of 45,000 workers. Since Mr. Lamont didn't do this, you must. Act according to the best interests of me and others like me who must pay for these raises and bonuses and reject this agreement.

We are told at every turn to respect our elected leaders, indeed one another. Year after year, you in Hartford take an ever-greater share of our earnings. We're told we're greedy if we don't play along. Yet that money you expropriate from us to fund rapacious agreements like this is a manifestation of our ingenuity and our labor. Further, it enables us to meet our responsibilities to our families and community. Did the governor or you even bother to take this into account? Did you consider the long-term financial ramifications of this agreement on rest of us? The

government has no obligation to guarantee that its current and retired workers maintain the lives to which they've become accustomed. That responsibility falls on the workers themselves, just as the quality of life I choose to live depends wholly on me.

Respectfully submitted,  
Faith Ham  
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